

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 31, line 21 and ending page 32, line 17 with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The cascade or tandem extrusion system shown in Figure 4a was used in the experiments. The mixtures were dry blended and fed into the first twin-screw extruder 40, using a feeder 22. The temperature in this extruder was maintained at a level sufficient for vaporizing the moisture (145°C to 170°C) ~~GIVE A RANGE~~, but not so high as to cause the decomposition of CBA and the degradation of wood-fiber. The output of this extruder was fed into the second extruder 42. At the interconnection, which was open to atmosphere, substantially all the vaporized water and other volatiles were devolatilized and the moisture and volatile-free mixture was conveyed into the second extruder 42 by the motion of the screw. The temperatures in the second tandem extruder 42 were maintained at 155°C and 165°C in zones 1 (43) and 2 (45), respectively. The CBA was decomposed in zone 3 (47) and the released gases were dissolved in the polymer matrix under the action of high shear at elevated temperature and pressure. The temperature of the melt was then lowered (typically to 150°C) in a heat exchanger 22. Finally, it was extruded out through the die 36 where the surface temperature was further reduced (to about 150°C. Lower limit is determined by material and its MFI. In some cases it can go even below 140°C) to increase the stabilization of the foaming process. Samples were taken at various die temperatures for density

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measurement and cell morphology characterization. --